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WORK AND ACTIVITY OF CZECHOSLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY UNIVERSITY

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[Comment: The following is a full translation of an article by Rudolf Vetiska, rector of the Party University of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, which was published in Funkcionar No 14 of 22 July 1954, which is the organ of the Central Committee of the party.]

The training of cadres is an important problem, the primary component of all measures directed at the realization of party policies. The Tenth Congress of the KSC (Komunistická strana Československa, Communist Party of Czechoslovakia) devoted primary attention to the question of cadre training, and stressed the significance of cadre activity in the general structure of socialism.

The training of cadres is a serious matter, not only from the standpoint of insuring the successful accomplishments of political and economic tasks, but also from the standpoint of intraparty matters. The party, the prime mover of all activity within our land, can fully accomplish its great and responsible tasks only if its ranks contain enough politically mature functionaries and workers who are experienced in party activity and have been schooled in party theory. These cadres, however, do not simply happen, but rather must be carefully selected, trained, and assigned by the party.

The party cares for the training of party cadres, functionaries and workers of party organs and organizations, by entrusting them with various tasks and functions so that they may acquire practical experience in political activity, learn to stand at the head of masses, insure fulfillment of tasks established in the interest of the masses. The cadres are provided with the opportunity of acquiring deep theoretical knowledge and learn to apply their scientific ideas to practical activity. With the aid of these ideas, they were lead to arrive at the correct conclusions, solve actual tasks, and give concrete suggestions as to where primary attention and strength should be applied so that tasks may be fulfilled. In view of these facts, the question of maturity in party theory is placed in the primary position.

One of the examples of the attention devoted to the theoretical training of party cadres is the resolution of the Central Committee of the KSC, issued in January 1953. This resolution provided for the creation of the Party University out of the [former] Central Political School in Prague. Classes at the Party University commenced in September 1953. From the standpoint of character and subject matter, the Party University is at a level equal to that of the other universities. Students take state examinations on the history of the party, political economics, and dialectical and historical materialism. They acquire such training as will provide them with the foundations for successful accomplishment of functions at the central and kraj levels, as well as in public life.

The task of the Party University is to teach the students to be loyal to the principles of Marxism and Leninism in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and socialistic patriotism, in the spirit of criticism and self-criticism, and in an uncompromising attitude toward all ideologies which are hostile to the party and the working class. By fulfilling these tasks, the Party University becomes one of the centers of ideological and creative scientific activity.

The Party University further prepares the theoretically informed student to put the party policies into practice, to lead devotedly and informedly, the workers in the building of a socialist society, and to be prepared always to defend our dear country.

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Experiences of the Party University during the period of one [first] year prove that the application of new, namely Soviet, experiences in organization and direction of all activity at the university has permitted the execution of the resolutions of the Central Committee of the KSC, and has enabled the transition from the Central Political School to the Party University to be made without undue inconvenience. The indications are that the utilization of Soviet experiences continues to be the best assurance of a continually improving level of teaching, study, and training of party cadres.

The rectorate of the Party University places great emphasis on the systematic deepening and improvement of organizational and teaching methods and aids in the department's daily work with the students. A continual rise in the level of study and increased individual attention to each student is thereby assured.

Systematic care and attention are devoted to the preparation, discussion, and presentation of lectures. Departments collectively discuss and critically evaluate each lecture. Chairmen of the departments are responsible for the fulfillment of these tasks. This approach to the preparation on lectures not only insures a high level of lectures, but also has a significant effect on the improvement of the political level of the teaching staff. In addition, basic lectures are discussed in the scientific council and at teacher's conferences.

In evaluating the lectures, departments are obligated to devote attention to their quality. This task is insured by the fact that all teachers are required to refer to the classical works of Marx and Lenin, the resolutions of the KSC congresses, and conferences and meetings of the Central Committee of the KSC. Much attention is devoted to individual assistance to the students. Individual courses are divided into study groups. The study of each group then becomes the responsibility of teachers of the [particular] subject in the appropriate department. This permits direct observation of the students at work, reveals their inadequacies, and makes it possible for assistance to be rendered to help them eliminate the inadequacies. This system improves the student's studies because the departments teach him to improve his book work, and prepare him for consultations, examinations, and the like.

One of the most important tasks of every teacher is to know all the students objectively. The teacher must know the difficulties and inadequacies of the students in the group entrusted to him and must render assistance where it is most needed. To fulfill this task, systematic improvement of the level of the students, as well as of the teaching staff, and the deepening of the practical pedagogical knowledge of each teacher must be achieved. The work of the teachers then becomes objective. The teachers discover the faults and inadequacies of their work and are guided by these in their [future] work and in the improvement of their teaching methods.

Another aid to the student's studies are cabinets (kabinety) of objective teaching. The lack of space from which the university suffers, retards the possibilities of fully developing objective teaching. This inadequacy is compensated for by the fact that the departments conduct exhibits devoted to various more difficult, problems of study. However, exhibits only partially compensate for objective teaching and for the work of the cabinets. Therefore, the task of establishing cabinets of objective teaching will be one of the main tasks toward which the university will systematically strive.

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Significant experiences were gained in the evaluation of the program for selection of students for individual courses at the Party University. Great stress is placed on the selection from the ranks of the party members of those students who have already proven themselves in many functions in the party, state, and economic systems and whose activity indicates possibility for further growth.

Nevertheless, it is evident that despite numerous warnings, selection of courses is still accomplished by heterogeneous methods. Significant differences exist in the general, as well as the basic theoretical, training of party members. Great inadequacies also appear in the knowledge of the native language. This is a major handicap to the work of the students, particularly in the early stages of study. It would be proper to conduct the selections one year in advance and to direct the students to complete their general education, particularly mastery of the native language, as part of the RSS (Rok stranickeho skoleni, Year of Party Training) program.

Also, the selection of students for shorter courses needs improvement. It is particularly necessary that the condition of the applicant's health be noted, because the university's program is demanding and requires a considerable amount of exertion. Loss of time resulting from illness is difficult to make up and involves the danger of further harm to the student's health.

All new students or candidates for Party University study must be aware that the study will require a high degree of effort. Knowledge is not automatically acquired by residence at the university, nor is it acquired through mere organizational provisions, even when such organizational provisions are of great importance. Knowledge can be acquired only through persistent and systematic study. This is the foundation, the hypothesis, and the starting point of successful study, not only at the Party University, but at other schools as well.

The rectorate is now devoting considerable attention to the improvement of the teaching staff. It is certainly a shortcoming that thus far, necessary conditions for the systematic study of science have neither been successfully assured nor created. The rectorate of the Party University is continually concerned with the scientific study of the teachers and is discussing the possibilities for further individual study by teachers as a part of the program to insure accomplishment of the university's tasks.

The teaching staff of the Party University is developing significant activity outside the university. Individual teachers are members of the lecture staff of the Central Committee of the KSC or are assisting at the Evening University of Marxism and Leninism (Vecerni universita marxismu-leninismu). Others lecture in conference rooms and classrooms in Prague, Brno, Plzen, Ostrava, Liberec, and other localities. Still others cooperate with some editorial staffs, develop significant publicity activity, and take part in editorial activity directed by the administration of the university. Significant assistance is also rendered to kraj political schools, which have organized seminars on various subjects for the teachers.

It is possible to judge from the one year's activity of the Party University that the route which it is following is correct. It is essential that all resources, including the teaching staff, as well as the students, be applied to accomplish the primary task, that is, to train the largest possible number of theoretically mature and politically and organizationally efficient party functionaries and workers. This will be the best contribution which the Party University can make toward the accomplishment of the tasks established by the Tenth Congress of the KSC.

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